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Is It Only a Scrap of Paper Proposed by the President?

The prepared address delivered in the Senate yesterday by Senator Lodge of Massachusetts on the proposed constitution for the League of Nations was written before Mr. Lodge attended the White House dinner party to the Committee on Foreign Relations and the Committee on Foreign Affairs at which President Wilson explained and defended his British plan for the creation of a super-nation. It was, like all of Mr. Lodge's contributions to political philosophy, a learned and felicitous document, rich in historical facts, illuminated by complete familiarity with our institutions, and instinct with its author's sympathetic comprehension of American genius for self-government and American passion for independence. It was a valuable and well considered study of the merits of the proposal now before us, and in it partisan political matter had no place. It was read yesterday by hundreds of thousands of citizens. It will be read to-day by other hundreds of thousands, and in the future it will be remembered and cited as an oration of enduring value to the student of our history.

We shall not attempt to epitomize Senator Lodge's address here, but one incident of the debate which it brought about has a high instructive value to the nation at this time. Senator Lodge complained that the proposed constitution was vague in its terms and difficult to understand in its provisions. As he read it, that proposed constitution would limit and impair the sovereign right of the United States to self-defense. To this Senator Hiram Bingham of Nebraska took exception, in an excited manner unhappily at variance with the Massachusetts Senator's demeanor. Senator Lodge replied that the misunderstanding brought out in this exchange emphasized the necessity for redrafting the league charter to make dispute over its construction impossible. Said Senator Lodge:

"Let's have it stated in the contract just what it means."

This not unreasonable suggestion brought from Senator Hiram Bingham a declaration astonishing from a supporter of the President and amazing from an advocate of a project advertised to prevent war:

"When war starts the right of self-defense supersedes everything else, and the Senator knows it."

Then, despite the League of Nations, war is not to be abolished. If the President were able to force his British League of Nations on the country the solemn covenants we had entered into would be superseded by the right of self-defense.

If this be the conception of the League of Nations held by those who urge us to adopt it, what becomes of their whole programme of idealism? If it will not prevent war, it will not accomplish its primary object; and if the treaties we are urged to sign are to be superseded by war, we are not asked to engage deliberately in contracts with the full knowledge that in the emergency they ostensibly are to control they are to be treated as mere scraps of paper?

Passing of the War Council.

The announcement made by Chairman Davidson of the dissolution of the War Council of the American Red Cross does not of course mean that Red Cross laborers in Europe are at an end. It is only the War Council that ceases to function, it having been determined that from now on the laborers of the world's greatest philanthropic organization may be directed by the permanent staff of the Red Cross. The feverish days of hospital emergency and supply service are over, although the great work of assisting civilian populations will go ahead.

What the Red Cross War Council was able to do in less than two years is a tribute not only to the council but to the generous people who made the work possible. Contributions of \$400,000,000 in money and supplies and the enrolment of one-sixth of the whole American population in Red

Cross membership—what country ever gave so much or so heartily?

As Mr. Davidson says in his statement, the Governments of our four principal allies have turned their hands and resources to their own aid.

For the labor the regular organization of the Red Cross is sufficient.

The War Council, its purpose accomplished, retires; and with it, we believe, go the sincere thanks of more than one nation.

Republican Obligations in the Sixty-sixth Congress.

The organization of the House of the Sixty-sixth Congress has been achieved by the Republican members elect with expedition and good temper. The struggle over the Speaker-ship ended with Representative Mann's motion to choose Representative Gillett as the candidate of the majority for this office by acclamation. The scheme of selecting a Committee on Committees by State delegations was proposed, adopted, and with two exceptions the appointments were made before the caucus adjourned. In all their acts the men on whom responsibility will rest in the House behaved in a manner highly encouraging to those who recognize how grave the duties are they must perform.

No Congress has ever faced harder tasks than those the Sixty-sixth must dispose of. For six years Congress has not performed its functions in the Federal Government as it should. The fact of the dereliction is notorious. It cannot be charged to the war. Before Germany and Austria-Hungary began the struggle that has been transferred from the battlefield to the council chamber, the Democratic legislators of the United States had revealed their incompetence, their lack of initiative, their abject dependence on the will and purpose of one man. Such an attitude is as unhealthy for the country as it should be humiliating to those who through weakness or ineptitude adopt it.

If the Republicans do their duty as it should be done, they will restore the legislative department of the Government to the credit and respect independence and patriotism can win for it. They will make it truly coordinate, not subordinate, as it has been. They will insist on full recognition of their rights and exercise those rights without fear or favor, for the benefit of the whole American people, and not for the advantage of any section of the country.

To do this they need not, they should not, adopt a policy of truculency toward the Chief Magistrate. Pinpricking the President, besides its inherent lack of dignity, is not only bad politics, but is bad Americanism. Holding sternly to their constitutional functions, assuming the responsibility their oath of office put on them, defending themselves and their prerogatives consistently and firmly against assaults, no matter where they may originate, the Republicans in the House and the Senate will find it necessary to resort to low cunning to establish themselves securely in the confidence of the country.

The duty of the Republicans will not be to put the President in a hole. It will be to pull the country out of the hole in which the President and his party have deposited it. This is a big job; it will tax their skill and strength; and when they have done it they will find the electors ready to do to the Democratic party exactly what it deserves.

Vacations and Luxury Taxes.

In many parts of the United States outside of Scotland Neck, N. C., persons are thinking about the summer vacation. That is a great pleasure, the thinking, and we would not spoil it, but we must suggest that in preparing for the holiday this year there is more to be thought upon than the hotel rates and railroad fares. The new Kitchen revenue taxes must be reckoned with.

Does the vacationist lack a trunk?

If he does, let him see to it that he buys one at \$50 or less; above that figure there will be, after May 1, a luxury tax of 10 per cent. Perhaps the vacationist, who has heard tales of trunks lost under Government management of railroads, thinks of using a huge valise instead of a trunk. A good leather one would cost say \$55; but as Mr. Kitchen of Scotland Neck and his colleagues decided that \$25 was the limit of honest expenditure for hand luggage, there will be a tax of \$3 on a \$55 bag.

A new hand bag for Mrs. Vacationist? Nothing more costly than \$7.50, please, lest a 10 per cent. tax fall on the excess price. According to the Halifax county, North Carolina, standards, any woman with a ten dollar hand bag is a wicked woman.

An umbrella and a parasol? Four dollars each is the limit. A fan? Let the lady keep within a dollar; the tax on a five dollar fan will be 40 cents. Lounging robes for the beach? The Southern statesmen, who have studied the subject of bath robes from Ararat to Asbury Park, have decided that \$7.50 is the limit. Who indulges in a gorgeous robe at \$10 must hand 25 cents over to the Government as penalty.

No man ever went on vacation without buying new shirts. Let not the fancy artist toward Shantung silks. The Kitchenites set \$3 as the top price to be paid for a shirt by anybody who is not a mad plutocrat; 30 cents is the tax on a six dollar shirt. As for hats, beware! It is true that the low priced derby now turned out by some Northern factories retails at \$8, but that is no criterion for Scotland Neck. The buyer of a man's hat at

\$8 will pay a tax of 30 cents, \$5 having been established as the height of luxury in pieces for the male head.

In the same way women's hats above \$15 are penalized. A little creation at \$45 will carry a tax of \$3. So the list goes: waistcoats, \$5; kimonos and waists, \$15; pajamas, either sex, \$5; shoes, \$10—such are sensible prices as Democratic statesmen see them. Everything more expensive is taxable vanity.

Well, says the man vacationist, I just go and rough it; no style for me on my outing; I'll escape this sumptuary law. Ah, no; quite the contrary. The tax on guns and fishing tackle, tennis and golf things, cameras, hunting garments—on every article connected with sport—is 10 per cent; not of an excess price, as in the case of trunks and fans, but 10 per cent of the whole cost.

There is no escape from the tax bounds that lay on the vacationist's trail. Even when the poor wretch borrows money to pay the new taxes he will have to pay a tax on the promissory note.

One Denial and Two Quotations Relative to Ireland.

The President denies, through his secretary, that he told his dinner guests "that the Irish question was a matter between Ireland and England, and that Ireland would not have any voice in the Peace Conference at present."

Mr. Wilson does not add that which would be of huge interest in Dublin, Belfast, London, Melbourne, New York and other places, namely: just what he did say about Ireland, if he said anything at all.

Senator Hiram Bingham is authority for the statement that the President was questioned about Ireland, "but that the question was not a serious one and was not answered."

On the other hand, another equally distinguished Democratic Senator, JOHN SHARP WILLIAMS, announces to the Senate "that the President had said the League of Nations had nothing to do with the Irish or immigration questions."

Every Irishman, whether he parades on the 17th of March or on the 12th of July, awaits further and more satisfying details.

America Loses Another of Its Grand Old Men.

When BUCHANAN was elected President in 1856 GEORGE F. EDMUNDS had been a member of the Vermont House of Representatives for two terms, and in the House of that year he was Speaker, an office he held four years. In 1810, intellectually alert, of ripened experience, and with his Americanism unimpaired by the vicissitudes of a lifetime spent in politics, he was among the leaders of those far sighted citizens who demanded that the honor of their country should be defended with all its resources of men and materials.

He lived to see the United States following the policy he urged upon it in his last contributions to its political development, vindicate itself on the battlefield and the sea.

Mr. Edmunds' career was unusual in its length and covered some of the most interesting and exciting incidents of our national history. He went to the Senate in 1856. The war was over; the period of reconstruction had begun. He was an ardent champion of the rights of freedmen. He was one of the court before which ANDREW JOHNSON was impeached. When the shadow of civil strife was cast across the land by the disputed election of 1876 he was a power in Congress. His part in the improvised instrument for the determination of that contest was conspicuous, yet in remarkable degree he escaped the bitterness it aroused. His name will always be associated with financial railroad legislation of half a century ago, with the anti-polygamy measures which aroused such heated discussion, and with the beginnings of the anti-monopoly enactments that now cover so many pages in our statute books.

As a Senator Mr. Edmunds represented the historic type of American statesman. He had high regard for the traditions, the conventions, the formalities, the rules, of the chamber in which he did his work. To him the inflection of secrecy was more than a legal fiction; it imposed a duty, and implied an obligation he scrupulously performed. He was dignified with the dignity that manifests seriousness of purpose, devotion to high tasks, study of the work that lay before him.

New England has produced many great men, and among them the name of EDMUNDS will never be enrolled.

The Psychopathic Criminal.

The psychopathic side of crime, which at one time was studied with some rather grotesque results, particularly by Lombroso, who cannot be acquitted of either exaggeration or inconsistency, has lately been investigated with both humanity and common sense. The result is to bring us nearer the solution of that difficult problem, the wise management of criminals. Even the meaning of the word criminal has changed, owing largely to the exceptional opportunities for observation afforded by the war and the mobilization of the industrial and military population. Humane observers will certainly be glad to find that a new and better system of both examination and punishment has been developed to take the place of the old and merely penal system.

During demobilization there has been an apparent increase in crime. In many cases discharged soldiers have appeared as offenders, which brought forward the practical problem of what was the real cause of misconduct in men who had done their duty and behaved gallantly at the front. Magistrates in all countries were unwilling to judge these

cases by previous standards, and often expressed a desire to have expert advice as to the mental condition of the criminal and the proper treatment to be pursued. Although a magistrate might know very well that the strain of war, wound shock, exposure, fatigue and hardship, joined to the sudden freedom given by the discharge from the army, were the causes of an actionable offence, he could not act upon his own view, being obliged to administer the law as it stood. The consequence is that men who are really nervous wrecks and are suffering from mild forms of lunacy have had to undergo the degradation of prison life.

Observation shows that it is necessary to classify offences and to individualize offenders, in other words, to avoid the error of treating all sorts of persons in the same way, for no two individuals are exactly alike; the practical finger print method employed for identification is based on this fact. That some system of mental identification of similar precision should be devised cannot be doubted. The criminal courts have no time for this discrimination; they were set up to determine facts; the notion of mental treatment and diagnosis never occurred to older jurists; but now the means for the application of enlightened and scientific judgment must be set up, and actually has been provided in England, where the public was revolted by the unhappy spectacle presented by sick and war-worn men in prison or in hospitals for the insane.

To remove this stigma and its results has been the object of a special commission, whose labor might be imitated in other countries. Experts are put at the disposal of sitting magistrates, and their business is to advise and to combat all the varied social diseases by means of modern knowledge and with something better than discipline which treats the crime, ignoring the prisoner. The results of the new system have been very encouraging, the official statement says. In psychopathic cases the court is merely a place of detention in which offenders are studied till provision is made for their supervision and means of livelihood in the community. This is a great step in advance.

Registering Adirondack Guides.

GEORGE D. PRATT, Conservation Commissioner, has put up to the Legislature the problem of registering guides in the Adirondacks under a system similar to that which has been so successful in Maine, Canada and some of the Western States. Registration, the Commissioner believes, would have a number of beneficial results, among which the most important are undoubtedly better protection of the forests, fish and game and an increase of convenience for vacationists making use of the woods.

The proposed legislation would not prohibit anybody from acting as a guide in the Adirondacks, but most vacationists would wish to choose registered guides. A list of registered men, revised at frequent intervals, would be of much value to the great and growing army of outdoor men. And growing army of outdoor men. And growing army of outdoor men. And growing army of outdoor men.

Also, there are a number of other living poets who have—were they lost to the scrutiny of Mr. M. S. Masters? Before he asserts that no one to-day can let him send detectives around the land who might be successful in unearthing poets who are able to emulate the immortal.

LOUIS THE MOURNFUL.

He Grieves at the Suggestion That Shakespeare's Art is Dead.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN:—Have you forgotten me so soon? You say that perhaps in the future a poet who can write blank verse like Shakespeare will be born. Why, such a poet would be born in 1854, right on the Pacific, five miles away from Newark, N. J. In 1858 he wrote a drama, "A Shakespeare." And up to 1890 he penned down several plays and tragedies in blank verse. Even in his old age he has not forgotten how to write one.

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LOUIS THE MOURNFUL.

Supreme Spirit of the Spheres.

New York, February 28.

MR. BURLESON AT HIS BEST.

Fifty Days the Time Taken to Deliver a Letter in Brooklyn.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN:—Here is another example of our efficient postal service. This time in Brooklyn. The envelope bears the following postmarks:

Brooklyn, January 8, 1 P. M.

Post Station Station, January 8, 1 A. M.

M. (This station covering my trip to the street station, February 21, 2 P. M.)

The letter was delivered February 22, in the morning.

The letter was addressed to 304 Washington Avenue, instead of 403 Washington Avenue, as it should have been, but this does not appear to be any great excuse for the delay of fifty days in delivery. My name is in the telephone directory and I have lived at the same address for the past ten years.

OWEN CHICHESTER.

BROOKLYN, February 28.

THE TELEPHONE SERVICE.

A Complaint That Burleson Methods Interfere With Business.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN:—What was a good telephone system is rapidly being ruined by the delay of fifty days in delivery. My name is in the telephone directory and I have lived at the same address for the past ten years.

OWEN CHICHESTER.

BROOKLYN, February 28.

THE HIGH COST OF INFANCY.

Emphatic Statement Relative to the Price of Perambulators.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN:—What do you mean by suggesting that a saving of \$11 on income tax would perhaps buy a perambulator? If you kept an infant waiting for a ride until baby carriages dropped to \$11 he would trip over his beard getting into the vehicle.

Ask any woman who has recently achieved one—either perambulator or baby—what it (meaning the perambulator) costs, and she will say, right off, \$50.

A real League of Nations would provide free perambulators for every one who can fill 'em.

NEW YORK, February 28.

Evidently Missed Both.

From the Bald Rock (left) Eagle.

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OUR COASTWISE SHIPS.

Will Their Experience Be That of the New Merchant Marine?

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN:—I enclose clipping showing the prospective going out of business of the Merchants and Miners line from this port to Baltimore and of the Clyde line from this port to Boston on account among other things of the diversion of freights from the steamships to the railroads. The quitting of the Mallory line from New York to Tampa and Mobile has heretofore been announced.

How is it to be reconciled with Mr. McAdoo's claim that retaining the railroad control by the Government will assist in developing water transportation?

Other causes besides the diversion of freight are also mentioned; namely, the high rate of wages that the Government has imposed to be paid deckhands and others. What prospect does this threaten for our coastwise commerce furnish us for believing that Government establishment of a seagoing merchant marine will be successful? If the Government cannot keep in existence a long established and flourishing coastwise commerce, what hope is there of its being successful in a new and more difficult enterprise?

We are led to believe that notwithstanding all the glorious future predicted, Government inefficiency in handling business affairs will make the attempt a failure. Its first efforts along this line, for example, a summer of vessels have been built here by the Emergency Fleet Corporation. I will say nothing of the exorbitant cost of their production, owing to paying \$5 a day and not to inexperienced workmen—and \$5 a day to water boys—but will confine myself to the results produced.

There are now some half dozen or more of the Government creations lying at our docks, or in dock, incapable of going to sea. Rudders twisted off on the trial trip; windlasses gone to pieces in attempts to hoist an anchor; boats and seams leaking; machinery undergoing repair, underengineered and in such condition that the masters, who are being retained on board at an expense of \$250 a month and \$5 a day for maintenance, say they will quit whenever the vessels are ordered to go to sea!

There is also a number of ships; they draw twice as much water as a practical ocean carrier requires; they burn from ten to twelve tons of coal a day more than they should; if they started on a long trip the coal required to be taken would leave no room for cargo, and their engines are utterly incapable of doing the work needed. This is the comment of practical seagoing men in this port. No one wants them; no one will buy them; no one will charter them; the Government has no use for them, and here they are, laid up at expense. Can we expect anything better in the future if the Government continues in its present policy of establishing a fleet for ocean service?

It seems to me that the only hope for reviving the business of this country and for establishing new lines of business is for the Government officials to take their hands off—and the sooner the better!

It is said that the Government cannot be returned to their owners at once without great loss and damage. That loss and damage is assured in any event, and the sooner it is met, the sooner business will get down to a stable basis.

The men who built railroads and established steamship lines are now being handled them so as to make a profit, and they are the proper ones to do it. If they have to take their properties back at a loss, let the taxpayers make the loss now, rather than in the future, when the Government will be now being made the loss will be much greater.

Take off this fixing of wages! There are complaints of "unemployment." How can we expect people to be employed if the Government fixes a minimum wage that business cannot pay?